

# Help Us Become The Healthiest Nation In One Generation Beginning With National Public Health Week (April 3-9, 2017)

**DOVER** – Did you know that In the U.S., where you live, your income, education, race and access to health care may mean as much as a 15-year difference in how long you will live? The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) wants to help ensure conditions where everyone has the opportunity to be healthy. During National Public Health Week (April 3-9, 2017), the DPH is joining the American Public Health Association (APHA) by encouraging Americans to do their part to help the United States become the healthiest nation by 2030.

“Our vision is to create the healthiest nation in one generation,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director for DPH. “Improving social and environmental conditions can dramatically improve public health. Making nutritious foods available to families reduces their chances of chronic disease and helps to send their children to school ready to learn. Installing sidewalks and marking crosswalks can reduce pedestrian fatalities and increase physical activity. Living in violence-free communities reduces injuries and stress and also encourages people to be physically active outside. We have so many opportunities to make a difference.”

Here are ways to get involved and advocate for a healthier Delaware:

- Start a community garden, open a food pantry, or ask existing local stores to provide more fresh produce.

Increasing opportunities for Americans to consume healthy foods helps reduce hunger and promotes healthy nutrition, helping them avoid developing diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or becoming obese. According to the 2015 Delaware Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), only about 15.2 percent of Delaware adults reported eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Try the U.S. Department of Agriculture's healthy eating tool, [Choose My Plate](#). Find Delaware's community Farmers Markets at <http://dda.delaware.gov/marketing/FarmersMarketsGuide.shtml>. Want to do more? Volunteer at a local food bank!

- Be more physically active. According to the APHA, nearly half of U.S. adults did not meet 2014 recommended guidelines of 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. The U.S. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults should do at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity a week. Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week. Only 20.2 percent of Delaware adults met those guidelines in 2015, according to the BRFS. Too much to fit in?
  - Start exercising in smaller increments.
  - Try being physically active for even a small amount of time every day or, at least 30 minutes three times a week.
  - Find fitness inspiration at <http://www.getupanddosomething.org/> and <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/getfit.html>.
- Join the APHA's [1Billion Steps Challenge](#) for Public Health Week.
- Join the [Motivate The First State](#) campaign. This is a public-private partnership that has inspired thousands of Delaware residents to be more physically active and healthier. Through its free

online social network participants can log a wide range of healthy activities and earn points that are converted to charitable donations that support several Delaware statewide organizations.

- Avoid tobacco or vaping. Tobacco use is the leading is the leading underlying or contributing cause of premature death in Delaware and smoking causes lung and other cancers, heart disease, stroke, emphysema, COPD, and other lung diseases. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Delaware. Delaware women rank fifth-highest and men rank sixteenth-highest for national lung cancer mortality (<http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/cancer.html>). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), liquid vaping cartridges contain nicotine and other toxic chemicals. Delawareans age 18 and older who want to quit can call the Delaware Quitline at 1-866-409-1858.
- Avoid alcohol, or at least drink it in moderation. Do not engage in binge drinking or drink at all if pregnant.
- Never use illegal drugs and take prescription opioids (pain medication) exactly as prescribed. Know the signs of addiction and the challenges created by addictive behaviors summarized in the [U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health of 2016](#). To learn about regional detox and treatment resources visit [www.HelpishereDE.com](http://www.HelpishereDE.com) and go to the "I am Here" tab and select 'Resources'. Persons without computers in New Castle County can call the 24/7 Crisis Hotline at 800-652-2929; in Kent and Sussex counties, call 800-345-6785.
- When new communities are planned, review land use plans to ensure that the communities are walkable, bikeable, and offer public transit stops. Know what designs work best at the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination's webpage:

<http://stateplanning.delaware.gov/>.

- Support your child, grandchild, relatives or neighbors in their educational journey to ensure that everyone graduates from high school. High school graduates tend to live longer and be healthier than students who drop out. Be in constant contact with your child's teachers, ask how their day was, and help out with homework. Don't have children in school? Volunteer as a mentor. If a student is having trouble in school, their teachers, guidance counselors, school based health centers, and others may be able to help. Didn't finish school? Drop-outs who want to earn their high school diplomas can enroll in the [James H. Groves Adult High School](#) or call 302-857-3340.
- Learn about the social determinants of health and how they impact where we live, work, and play. Poverty, deplorable living conditions, homelessness, high school drop-outs, and racism negatively impact health and can be reversed. Encourage a health-in-all-policies approach with transportation, housing, education, and law enforcement agencies. A great place to start is by reading the [Health Equity Guide for Public Health Practitioners and Partners](#) published by DPH and the University of Delaware.

For more information about how you can make a difference, visit the [American Public Health Association's website](#). You can also follow them on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/nphw> and join them for their #NPHWChat on April 5.

The Delaware Division of Public Health achieved national public health agency accreditation in 2016. DPH received its five-year accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Delaware is the only accredited state health agency in the Mid-Atlantic region. Accreditation satisfies a goal of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which identified accreditation as a key strategy for

strengthening our nation's public health infrastructure.

*A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.*

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.